

Matt Carnagie

From: Jim Casha <jim.casha@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2015 7:26 AM
To: Matt Carnagie
Cc: Rep. Thomas Hooker; Rep. Mike Callton
Subject: IMPORTANT: Public Comment: Jim Casha, Families, Children, and Seniors, Joint Meeting with Health Policy 8/19/15

Hello Matt,

Could you please see that my comments get sent to the committee members in time for today's meeting. Thanks.

Pressing on, with unwavering faith,

Jim Casha
540-717-9240

Committee: Families, Children, and Seniors, Joint Meeting with Health Policy

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015

Public Comment by Jim Casha, 540-717-9240, jim.casha@gmail.com

RE: Safe Sleep Presentation by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Committee Chair Hooker,

Enclosed is my public comment on today's agenda item regarding the 'Safe Sleep Presentation'. Yesterday, I drove 4 hours to attend the scheduled Joint Meeting with Health Policy & Families, Children, and Seniors, only to find that the meeting had been cancelled. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend today, but I would appreciate it if my comments could be distributed to the committee members **prior to the meeting** and included in the meeting minutes. Perhaps you, or another committee member could question the DHHS about why my concerns related to prenatal alcohol exposure, especially as it relates to babies 'sleeping in the womb', are not being addressed.

I am sure, that if I were in attendance, I would be sanctioned by the Committee Chair (at least if the Chair was anyone but you!) for talking 'off topic' as soon as I mentioned prenatal alcohol exposure. However, the two subjects **are** related, **and**, a precedent has already been established ...by none other than Governor Snyder himself.

Babies spend 70% of their time in the womb ...sleeping. Are they 'safe'?

If the mother has consumed alcohol, any amount of alcohol, the answer is an unequivocal, NO!

When is the Governor, the legislature, and the Department of Health and Human Services, going to accept this fact ...and, more importantly, do something **substantial** amount ending this unsafe, and abusive practice? When? I gotta know. I gotta know now.

Here is Gov. Snyder's response to my question on why he is not 'attacking' the prenatal alcohol issue. As you can see, he brought up his wife's 'Safe Sleep' initiative. (WDET's REDLINE with Bankole Thompson - July 16, 2015)

Jim: You know what I'd like to talk to the Governor about is, you talk about breaking the cycle of poverty and also about breaking the cycle of crime, well, you know we link both of those to lack of education problems and I would like to ask the Governor why he isn't focusing more on the prenatal alcohol issue, and especially you know, proper prenatal care, proper medical, proper nutrition, the absence of alcohol during pregnancy which is directly linked to cognitive disabilities in our children which prevents them from getting the education that they need to break this cycle of poverty and many of them end up in our prison system, and ,uh, you know, we just waste resources ...it can't be fixed after the fact. We need to have a program ..

BT: Thank you very much Jim. Let's let the Governor answer that.

*Snyder: Yeah, actually Jim, we are working that issue, and we've been working that for sometime in terms of we got programs where we've been trying to get more visiting nurses and maternal care. Actually, when I talk about the education system I call it P-20 and the 'P' is not pre-school ... it's **prenatal**. Um, so I concur with your thought processes, you need to start before babies are born in terms of this whole cycle. So, we are doing things to help expectant mothers to get an educational program to them, do better practices, to help with infant mortality. **We talked about the First Lady having an initiative on sexual assault on campus, she also lead, help lead, a great effort on safe sleep** so these are all things that do make a difference in terms of having people grow up and be successful. One of the other big initiative we just done in this last year's budget is I call it Pre-3, it's really putting an emphasis on 3rd grade reading.*

A 'song and dance' as they say. Governor Snyder clearly, does not understand the prenatal alcohol issue ...or how to reduce infant mortality. Or, he doesn't want to really address the issue, because he doesn't want to spend the money to fix it ...even though in the long run, he would be saving not only lives, but the taxpayers **Billions** of dollarsso they can fix their roads.

The best solution to problems, are solutions that solve more than one problem. Addressing 'safe sleep' *after* the child is born, will solve only one 'problem' ...keeping the child alive. However, since prenatal alcohol exposure IS a leading cause of infant mortality, including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), keeping these children alive will in fact create more problems. Keeping children alive, who have been subjected to prenatal alcohol exposure, with the current attitudes of the Governor and Legislature to this problem, and the lack of resources dedicated to addressing their lifetime needs, is cruel and inhumane ...as inhumane as that may sound.

Prevention is the answer.

If the prenatal alcohol issue is of major importance to the Governor, how come he 'tied' the \$900,000 he proposed for an Alcohol Prevention Program for Pregnant Women to an increase in liquor license fees, knowing full well, this legislature, has no stomach for it. Why didn't he propose using some of the \$600 million he has stashed in the 'Rainy Day Fund'? That's what a 'good Dad', a kind Dad, my Dad, would have done. It has been over 40 years since the first child in Michigan was diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Isn't it time we buy them an umbrella?

In case you need more evidence of the severity of the problem. Here it is. I'm sure Detroit shares this problem with Chicago.

Will you please DO something?

Pressing on, with unwavering faith,

Jim Casha
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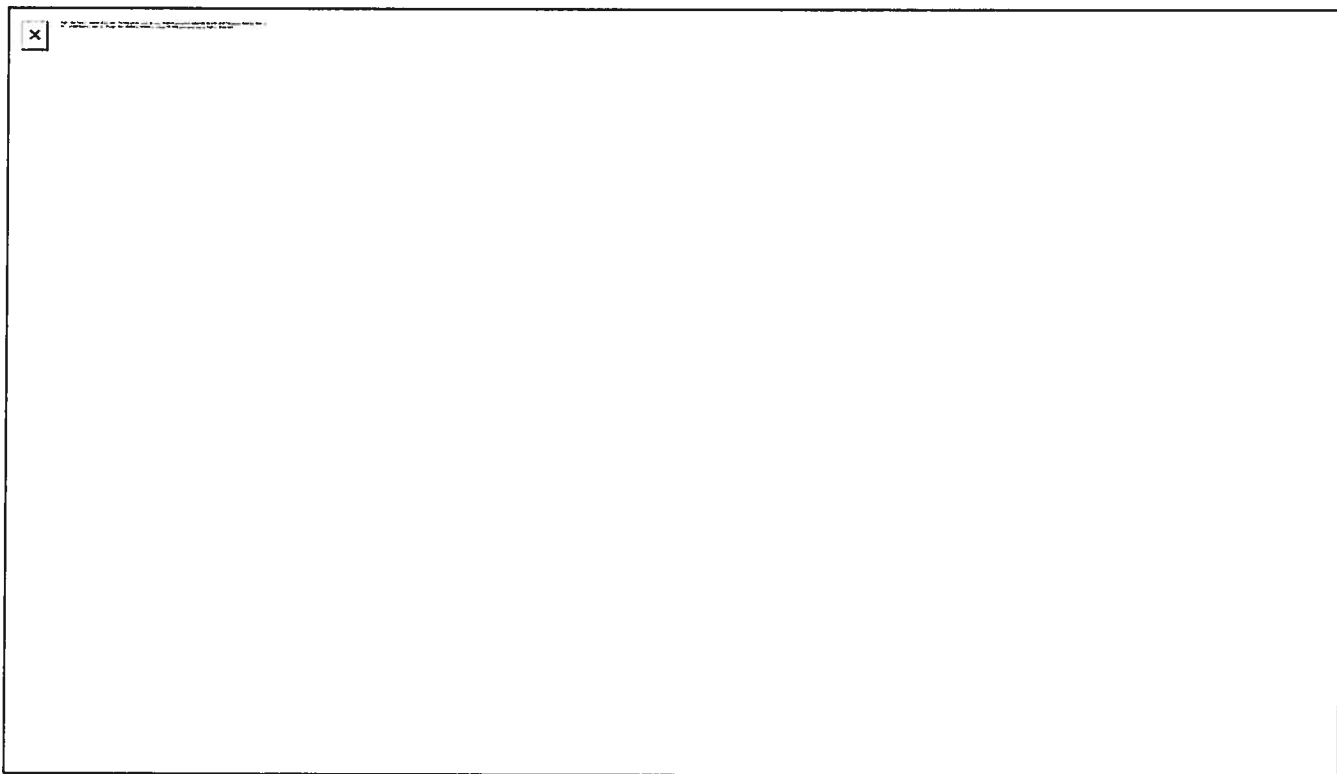
[From]The Inquisitr - **Dr. Carl Bell Says Fetal Alcohol Syndrome ‘Biggest Public Health Problem For African-Americans Since Slavery’**

Dr. Carl Bell, a retired professor of psychiatry and public health at the University of Illinois at Chicago, currently a staff psychiatrist at Jackson Park Hospital, calls Fetal Alcohol Syndrome the “biggest public health problem for African-Americans since slavery.” Dr. Bell has treated patients for over **40 years**.

Posted in: [Health Studies](#) Posted: July 18, 2015

Dr. Carl Bell Says Fetal Alcohol Syndrome ‘Biggest Public Health Problem For African-Americans Since Slavery’

image: <http://cdn.inquisitr.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Carl-Bell-fetal-alcohol-syndrome-665x385.jpg>



Dr. Carl Bell, a retired professor of psychiatry and public health at the University of Illinois at Chicago, currently a staff psychiatrist at Jackson Park Hospital, calls Fetal Alcohol Syndrome the “biggest public health problem for African-Americans since slavery.” Dr. Bell has treated patients for over 40 years.

“Now since 1967 as a physician I have been witnessing this phenomenon. That, when I was in medical school, was called socio-cultural mental retardation,” Dr. Carl Bell stated, according to the *Sun Times*, speaking of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and other neurological damage with the same cause. “It’s only been recently that I’ve been able to figure out what the hell I was seeing.”

Dr. Bell published a new study on an epidemic of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome on the South Side of Chicago. In an unbelievably disproportionate rate compared with the whole of the American society, Dr. Bell and his colleague discovered that a staggering 39 percent of patients at a family medicine clinic in Chicago were found to display “clinical profiles consistent with neurobehavioral disorders associated with prenatal alcohol exposure (ND-PAE).” Even more frightening, when just the children were studied, 57 percent of the patients showed profiles consistent with ND-PAE. ND-PAE “is a new clarifying term, intended to encompass the full range of developmental disabilities associated with exposure to alcohol in utero.” The general U.S. population exhibits ND-PAE between two and five percent of the time. *The Sun Times* article likened the unremitting violence attributed to ND-PAE to genocide, calling Chicago’s south and west sides “war zones.”

Of the children who exhibited these clinical profiles, 100 percent of them were black, according to *Medscape*, and the median household income of the individuals involved in the study was \$33,809.

Dr. Bell says these Chicago residents with fetal alcohol syndrome have gone undiagnosed. With no intervention, and subtle brain damage, Bell says that many find it difficult to keep a job. Though many graduate, even basic math is difficult. Bell says the undiagnosed individuals with fetal alcohol syndrome have “explosive tempers” and “bad judgment.”

Dr. Bell noted that screening is crucial for this community and other communities at-risk. He urged screening for alcohol related problems in every child in the nation. He said that postnatal treatment with the nutrient choline has demonstrated the ability to “ameliorate some of the sequelae” in children who were exposed to alcohol during pregnancy. The study was published online in *Psychiatric Services in Advance* and stresses that maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy is the largest preventable cause of intellectual disability.

“Clinicians need to become more adept at obtaining patients’ historical information and identifying physical characteristics of neurodevelopmental disorders.

ND-PAE criteria was proposed in section three of the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder*(DSM-5), and investigators called for it to be given more serious consideration.

“This disorder is aligned with concepts of fetal alcohol syndrome, the most severe outcome of fetal alcohol exposure, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.”

Dr. Bell’s research was profoundly important, because in the tested population, 49 percent had been diagnosed with some sort of neurodevelopmental disorder during childhood, but examples of the diagnoses were Autism Spectrum Disorder, intellectual disability, or ADHD.

“Their brains are neurologically damaged. And they don’t have control of their emotions,” Dr. Bell told My Fox Chicago. “A lot of these patients are naive. They’re easily frustrated. They, uh, again you see the explosive temper that goes on for maybe an hour.”

What do you think of Dr. Carl Bell's new research and his assertion that fetal alcohol syndrome is the "biggest public health problem for African-Americans since slavery?"

[Photo compiled from AAFP and Family Practice News]

Read more at <http://www.inquisitr.com/2262013/dr-carl-bell-says-fetal-alcohol-syndrome-biggest-public-health-problem-for-african-americans-since-slavery/#LJRcpCiCBHVGZ5vz.99>